

CITY OF CHICOPEE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 15, 2021

Pursuant to Mass. General Law Ch. 131, Section 40 and the Chicopee Wetland Ordinance Ch. 272, the Chicopee Conservation Commission held a public hearing on **Wednesday, September 15, 2021** at 6:15 PM in the Chambers Conference Room, City Hall Annex, 4th Floor, 274 Front St., Chicopee, MA 01013

Celeste Donovan opened the meeting at 6:15 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Conservation Commission attendance:

Member	Present	Absent	Excused
Celeste Donovan	X		
Charles Payne	X		
Sharon Balcom			X
Meghan Balakier	X		
Richard Valcourt	X		
Brian Nunes			X

Planning/Conservation Staff attendance:

Member	Present	Absent	Excused
Lee Pouliot, Director			X
James Dawson, Development Manager	X		
Patrick McKenna, Assistant Planner			X
Nathan Moreau, Associate Planner			X

Item 1: (Continued from April 7, 21, May 5, 19, June 2, 16, July 7, August 4 and September 1, 2021) NOI for Chicopee Reservoir Annual Drawdown and Vegetation Management Project. Work will include removal of vegetation within 20' of the reservoir dam and for a five year authorization of the annual drawdown of the reservoir for maintenance purposes. Work will occur within Inland Bank, Bordering Vegetated Wetland, Land Under Waterways and Waterbodies, Riverfront Area and Buffer Zone. Location: Chicopee Memorial State Park – 570 Burnett Rd., Chicopee, MA 01020. Applicant: Sean Gaffney, Massachusetts DCR, 1048 North Rd., Westfield, MA 01085

Notes: Steve Sroka of Tighe and Bond was in attendance to represent the Applicant. Mr. Sroka explained that the Massachusetts DCR had just given Tighe and Bond the permission to proceed with the project and he was asking for one more continuance to October 6, 2021 as he felt confident that Tighe and Bond would have required information to move forward as it is the intention to move ahead with the drawdown this November. The Commission explained it had been far too long since the initial presentation was made for them to feel confident making any decisions and therefore requested a full comprehensive presentation at the October 6th meeting. Commissioner Valcourt requested that Tighe and Bond submit a copy of the Dam Safety Permit to the Commission. The Commission voted to continue the hearing to October 6, 2021 but most likely would not give any further extensions. Commissioner Payne noted he will be opposed to further extensions.

Motion to continue to October 6, 2021 was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Richard Valcourt. Vote was 4-0 to continue to October 6, 2021.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan			X	
Charles Payne			X	
Meghan Balakier			X	
Richard Valcourt			X	

Item 2: (New) RDA for demolition of existing garage and construction of a new approximately 900 SF garage. Work will occur within buffer zone to Terrace Escarpment (TE) Soils. Location: 60 Swol St. Chicopee, MA 01020. Applicant: Robert Todd, same address.

Notes: Jared Laravee explained the RDA to the Commission. He noted the new garage would be constructed farther away from the TE Soils than the existing garage. Staff noted it had discovered the property was in a Conservation Commission jurisdictional area upon reviewing a Building Permit Checklist. Staff also noted how cordial and professional Mr. Laravee was to work with regarding the RDA filing. The Commission decided that silt fencing and straw wattles would be adequate erosion control for a project of this size. The Commission voted to issue Positive 5, Positive 6, and Negative 1 determinations with standard erosion control conditions.

Motion to grant Positive 5, Positive 6, and Negative 1 Determinations was made by Meghan Balakier and seconded by Richard Valcourt. Vote was 4-0 to grant Positive 5, Positive 6, and Negative 1 Determinations with conditions.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan	X			
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Richard Valcourt	X			

Item 3: Minutes from September 1, 2021

Notes: Celeste Donovan abstained because she was not in attendance for the September 1, 2021 meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Richard Valcourt. Vote was 3 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstension.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan				X
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Richard Valcourt	X			

Item 4: Sign Bills. – No Bills to sign.

Item 5: Upcoming Projects/Discussion

- Requests for Certificates of Compliance on October 6, 2021 agenda:
 - 19 Old Chicopee St.
 - The Commission discussed the upcoming Request and it is not willing to grant the Certificate of Compliance until the violator pays any accrued fines. Fine money to be used to purchase trees or other Conservation related issues.
 - 62 Britton St.
 - Staff noted it had not been to the site but would visit the site to make a determination of the site status for the meeting on October 6th.
 - 125 Walter St.
 - Staff noted the Order of Conditions for this address was issued in 2012 and that it had to visit the site to be able to determine if a Certificate could be issued on October 6th.
- NOI for Food Bank of Western MA.
 - Staff noted an NOI for the Food Bank was expected for the October 6th meeting.
- NOI for Proposed Development on East Main St. – Date unknown.

- 535 East Main Street Enforcement Order – Staff announced to the Commission that on the afternoon of the Commission meeting on September 15, 2021 it had received a request from the Applicant to extend the time allotted to complete the restoration to October 1, 2021. The Commission discussed the request and concluded that they were opposed to any further extensions since no site work had occurred as of the time of the meeting and an extension was not requested within the timeline approved by the Commission on July 21, 2021. The Commission requested the property owner and/or the representative appear before the Commission on October 6, 2021.

Motion to deny the request for an extension was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Meghan Balakier. Vote was 4-0 to deny the request for an extension.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan		X		
Charles Payne		X		
Meghan Balakier		X		
Richard Valcourt		X		

Item 6: Adjournment – Next scheduled meeting is October 6, 2021

Motion to adjourn was made by Meghan Balakier and seconded by Richard Valcourt. Vote was 4-0 to adjourn.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan	X			
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Richard Valcourt	X			

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.